

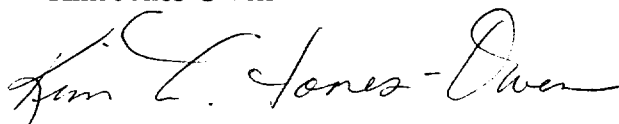
The Feminist Education: Empowering Students, Changing the World

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kim Jones-Owen". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the printed name.

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Abstract

The following discussion is a detailed assessment of the many advantages of claiming a feminist education. These benefits include coursework that is interdisciplinary, promotes diversity, emphasizes student-centered instruction, impacts students personally, contains challenging and enjoyable content, helps develop critical thinking skills, encourages feminist activism, and prepares students to compete in the occupational realm. Special attention is paid to the direct experiences of women's studies students and graduates in evaluating feminist pedagogy. The statements of these individuals unquestionably point to the fact that a feminist education is psychologically, spiritually, socially, and professionally beneficial to those who choose to seize it.

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The Feminist Education: Empowering Students, Changing the World

Unquestionably, our contemporary society is one in which patriarchal values are paramount. Nowhere is this more evident than in the educational system, where the experiences, accomplishments, and contributions unique to women are overwhelmingly devalued and marginalized. Only recently have women and men begun to open their eyes to the problematic aspects of male-centered curriculum. This enlightenment has produced positive results in many post-secondary educational institutions, due greatly to the impact of a recent phenomenon known as women's studies. Such programs are a natural product of modern feminism, a movement whose definition varies from person to person. Yet, few will disagree with bell hooks' contention that feminism is "a commitment to eradicating the ideology of domination that permeates Western Culture on various levels—sex, race, and class, to name a few" (quoted in Kramarae and Treichler 159).

Women's studies programs that continue to work their way into the educational culture of colleges and universities are accompanied by a revolutionary concept—that women are deserving subjects of study and that the instructional context of many classrooms is in desperate need of alteration. Luckily, women's studies courses provide a welcome alternative to current misogynist curricula. Students who choose this particular course of study, who essentially engage in a "feminist education," gain tremendous benefits—both professionally and personally—and complete their studies better prepared than the average student for active participation in a global community. Women's studies courses are interdisciplinary, promote diversity, emphasize student-centered instruction,

impact students personally, contain challenging and enjoyable course content, help develop critical thinking skills, encourage feminist activism, and prepare students to compete in the occupational realm. The following discussion shall elaborate upon these aspects of women's studies, advantages that are inevitable for students who claim a feminist education.

One of the most unique—and, in the opinion of this author, beneficial—aspects of a feminist education is its interdisciplinarity. Florence Howe asserts that “the chief characteristic of the women's studies curriculum is its interdisciplinary nature” (33). Indeed, the ideal program provides “a diversity of disciplines, political ideologies, instructional methodologies, and associated activities that allow flexibility and growth in an academic and world community” (Conway-Turner et al. 94).

Friedman et al. outline the types of courses that should ideally be part of an inclusive Women's Studies Program. The titles are quite specific and delineate real classes that have been or are offered at other universities. The authors in no way suggest that these exact courses be immediately adopted at every post-secondary educational institution—they merely hope that universities and, specifically, Women's Studies Programs, will continue to expand their horizons in regard to the available curriculum. Some classes recommended by Friedman et al. are as follows: “Immigrant Women in the New World: African and Caribbean Communities and Cultures;” “Women Culture, and Society: Introduction to Women's Studies;” “History of Western Sexuality;” “Homosexuality and Society;” “AIDS and Gender;” Women in Technological Cultures;” “Introduction to the Psychology of Women;” “Sociology of Women at Work;”

“Nineteenth- and Twentieth Century Literature: Centering the Margins,” and “New Perspectives in Philosophy and Religion” (viii-xv).

Indeed, Women’s Studies Programs across the nation, including Ball State University’s program, maintain the recommended interdisciplinarity of Friedman et al. quite well. In fact, Ball State offers many courses similar to the above suggestions in addition to many others. Some examples include “Introduction to Women’s Studies;” “Women in Literature;” “Psychology of Women;” “Women in Religion;” “Sociology of Women;” “Gender in the Workplace;” “Gender Issues in the Mass Media;” “Women in American History;” “Family Law;” and “Underrepresented Voices in Mathematics, Science, and Technology.”

Most prospective women’s studies students are primarily attracted to the discipline because of the wide variety of courses available through the program. In Women’s Studies Graduates: The First Generation, Barbara F. Luebke and Mary Ellen Reilly questioned a number of past students about their undergraduate experiences with women’s studies. Here is what a few of them had to say:

I took the major because it was an interdisciplinary program and appealed to my interest in and hunger for the female perspective on religion, history, sociology, psychology, development, creativity, expression, and spirit. It was essential to my development as a young bisexual feminist (93).

—“Molly B.,” Mount Holyoke College

I guess in many respects women’s studies taught me to be very critical of the society in which I live. I have questioned every aspect of that society via an array of disciplines—history, sociology, anthropology, psychology, literature (163).

—Eve V. Belfance, Yale University

(Women's studies) was the single most interesting field I encountered in college and spanned all the disciplines. I could take any class on campus and use the skills developed in women's studies to analyze and critique topics in an entirely new way. In psychology, you could question Freud's methods; in science, you could debate an 'objective and impartial' law (145).

--Vivienne Finley, Mount Holyoke College

Moreover, current Ball State students responding to a women's studies minor questionnaire expressed their appreciation for the flexibility and variability of the program's curriculum. For instance, Mary Jo Estes asserted that "the different variety of classes. . .has always been a great help to me." Further, Katie Mellen pointed out that the Women's Studies Program "allows students to take classes from many different departments that would probably not be otherwise open to them." Finally, Sara Jones voiced her gratitude "that there is something to interest everyone" (Appendix A).

The very fact that so many individuals are attracted to the interdisciplinarity of a feminist education is a tribute to the open-mindedness, intelligence, flexibility, and dynamism of women's studies students. Even more amazing, however, is the utter trust that women's studies faculty place in other departments. Take, for example, the women's studies minor at Ball State University. The only courses offered directly through the program are an introductory women's studies course, independent study, a seminar on special topics, and a paid or unpaid internship that provides students the opportunity to either work in the office or gain hands-on experience in the world. Due to these limited options, students at Ball State must take the majority of their minor course load from instructors whose theoretical orientation and competence may or may not be in line with

that of the Women's Studies Program. This display of complete confidence in students and non-women's studies instructors is a rarity in the academic universe.

Because a feminist education is thoroughly interdisciplinary by nature, the mere presence of women's studies in the university clearly challenges the traditional curriculum. O'Barr and Wyer contend that "the academic environment is modeled on the worst of the norms for white, Western male, father/son relations—competitive, unsupportive, sometimes hostile battling to confront and outperform one another" (74). This model inevitably excludes women not only because some faculties do not choose to learn the new scholarship regarding women, but also because of the absence of gender neutral language in textbooks, the unwelcoming culture of many disciplines, the deficiency in numbers of female instructors, and the fact that competitive classroom environments overwhelm so many female students (O'Barr and Wyer 73). For these very reasons, women's studies programs proudly serve as a catalyst for change in higher education.

Feminist educators employ organized strategies to enact institutional transformation. Such projects began in the early 1980's with "The Workshop on Integrating Women's Studies into the Curriculum," supported and sponsored by the Southwest Institute for Research on Women (SIROW), the Rockefeller Family Fund, and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The meeting gathered individuals together to discuss "strategies on integrating women's studies into the curriculum, assess current theory and practice, and develop a paper to inform college administrators about the goals and potential impact of such projects" (Schmitz 3). Since this collaboration, feminist scholarship regarding the creation of gender inclusive curriculum in universities

has flourished, as evidenced by the colossal amount of contemporary literature encouraging instructors, faculty, and administrators to act for such change. Betty Schmitz's Integrating Women's Studies into the Curriculum: A Guide and Bibliography includes an extensive listing of resources—over two hundred—that deal with feminist scholarship, curricular transformation, inclusion project evaluation, course revision models, and program enhancement (125-83). Unquestionably, these texts represent a resounding call for immediate alterations to patriarchal practices in colleges and universities.

According to JoAnn M. Fritsche, the goal of “inclusion projects” is not simply to provide equal opportunity for women in educational environments; additionally, the desired outcome of such plans is to demonstrate *why* and *how* to transform standards so that women and men are equally centered and credited for their contributions to individual disciplines (xxviii). Fritsche additionally maintains that equity will only be achieved “when academic and professional curricula, staffing patterns, and institutional policies reflect respect for, as well as consideration of, the needs, contributions, and values of women and men of diverse races, nations, lifestyles, and classes” (xxx).

Unfortunately, such equality in institutions of higher education has yet to be achieved. However, women's studies programs nationwide have certainly given universities cause to reassess traditional curricula. Further, feminist principles and educational practices have begun to work their way into other disciplines. In surveying a few recent volumes on the impact of feminist research, Marilyn Jacob Boxer found that such areas as anthropology, archaeology, art, biology, classics, economics, education, English, French, Spanish, ethnic studies, history, literary criticism, philosophy, political

science, psychiatry, religious studies, sociology, and theater have been impacted by the movement of feminist educators toward curricular equity. Boxer also noted that two publishers have created series studying the effects of feminism on various disciplines (54).

Women's studies has most profoundly influenced the humanities because of this discipline's self-reflective nature. Women's studies has moved more slowly in the natural sciences, such as biology, chemistry, and astronomy (Boxer 55). Nonetheless, in some institutions, women's studies curriculum is mandated for general educational requirements (Howe 29). However, it is difficult to argue with the notion that feminist educators and administrators have worked arduously with colleges and universities to alter the current educational system—and in many ways, their efforts have been rewarded.

An additional favorable aspect of a feminist education is its prolific love for diversity. As we have seen, the coursework involved with a women's studies degree is quite varied, but there is more involved in diversity than that—indeed, much more. According to Conway-Turner et al., “diversity is the strength of an academically sound program” (95). In addition to attracting a plethora of individuals ranging from eighteen to eighty, female to male, black to white, rich to poor, able to disabled, and straight to gay, women's studies prides itself upon instructing students to view diversity as an aspect of human existence that must be celebrated.

Yet, the feminist education has not always been sensitive to the needs of a diverse student body. Boxer asserts that “the founders of women's studies were largely white women” (101). In 1976, Florence Howe's study of fifteen mature, geographically

representational women's studies programs found that, much like the social movement in which it was rooted, women's studies tended to be predominately white and female. Notwithstanding, these first programs were quite disparate in age and background, as fifty to sixty percent of all majors and minors were categorized as "re-entry" students, causing tremendous variability in age (34).

In one of the only recent, comprehensive, and nationwide surveys of women's studies students, Luebke and Reilly's 1995 study found that in the years since Howe's study, change has been slow. Of the 375 questionnaires sent out to women's studies graduates, only 89 individuals who qualified to participate ultimately replied. Those who responded represent 24 separate states and every region in the country. Additionally, the sample graduated from a variety of women's studies programs nationwide.

Only one of the respondents in Luebke and Reilly's survey was male. Furthermore, only five women's studies graduates indicated that they were women of color, listing Native-American, African-American, Korean-American, Asian-American, and Asian as their perspective races (3-7). Moreover, a survey of women's studies minors at Ball State University provided similar results. Of the approximately sixty-five minors given questionnaires regarding information on demographics, personal and occupational relevance of the minor, future goals of the student, and perceived strengths and weaknesses of the program, only fifteen answered. Every respondent was both white and female. This is discouraging, considering the great emphasis Women's Studies Programs place upon maintaining diversity within its faculty and students.

However, although students today tend to remain white and female, other variables such as sexual orientation, religious affiliation, age and class differed greatly

among Luebke and Reilly's respondents. Approximately one-third of the women's studies graduates were bisexual or lesbian (10-11). Although the majority of these graduates (49) identified with no religion, others listed a variety of spiritual avenues, including Protestant (12), Jewish (11), feminist spirituality (4), Christian (3), Quaker (3), Catholic (2), and one each of Greek Orthodox, Buddhist, and New Age (7). Of the eighty-eight who gave their age, 47 were in their twenties, 29 were in their thirties, seven were in their fifties, and two were in their seventies (3). While the majority of graduates (67) who chose to participate in this study indicated an annual income of less than \$30,000, eleven made between \$30,000 and 39,999, four made between \$40,000 and \$49,999, and three fell into the \$50,000-\$99,999 category (9). Two of the respondents stated that their incomes varied from year to year and two declined to specify an income. No data was collected in regards to ability. From this information, it is evident that women's studies students are increasingly diverse in respect to some variables; however, drastic improvement is needed regarding the diversification of ethnicity and gender.

In a related work, Boxer points out that the firm presence of different types of feminists--black, lesbian, Native-American, socialist, working-class, liberal, old, Jewish, upper-class, Wicken, radical, Mexican-American, disabled, young, and straight, to name but a few--has resulted in division. Feminism and women's studies has become a movement that has not one unifying leader, but a number of separate individuals to whom various feminists can turn to for personal, professional, and political guidance (103). Some would argue that this is an inevitable portion of the movement and should therefore be viewed in a positive light. Whatever one believes in regards to the division, it unquestionably affects Women's Studies Programs as they both struggle to keep up with

the ever-changing leadership and direction of feminism and attempt to meet the needs of every student.

Regardless of the unstable demographics of women's studies students, faculties of such programs nationwide have always promoted the acceptance of diversity through instruction, hiring practices, and program planning. In fact, the statement of purpose for the Ball State women's studies minor reflects this:

The women's studies minor offers an interdisciplinary field of study that examines women's experiences throughout history and across cultures, races, classes, ethnic groups, sexual orientations, age groups, abilities, and religions. The goal of the minor is to empower students with knowledge, collaborative learning, critical thinking, appreciation of diversity, and personal growth.

Undoubtedly, women's studies students and graduates tend to be more tolerant of individuality than the average person, a fact that feminist scholars, instructors and faculty should be proud of.

Feminist educators additionally take pride in the reality that women's studies courses, particularly those instructed by women's studies faculty, are positively student-centered. Antiauthoritarian teaching has become the accepted dynamic structure of most women's studies courses, a welcome change for many students from the oppressive competitiveness of more traditional classroom settings. Boxer points out that feminist professors use instructional methods that legitimizes their own power while reducing the troublesome semblance of absolute authority (98).

Further, women's studies instruction encourages the recognition of each student's importance. "The attempt to validate every woman's experience, whatever her identity,

has infused every aspect of women's studies" (Boxer 21). The majority of women's studies instructors bolster students' self-expression and esteem by conducting class with a circular seating pattern, encouraging collaborative learning, adopting classroom participation rules that disallow the practices of interrupting and criticizing, and downplaying their authority by encouraging students to value their own experiential knowledge and expertise (Boxer 21). As a result, students are given room to discover what is most important to them, what they want to learn, and where their needs are not being met (Musil 31).

Indeed, "women's studies values a link between the heart and head, action and idea, feeling and intellect. They are not in opposition but rather in dialogue: informing, correcting, enlarging knowledge in the process" (NWSA Task Force for the Association of American Colleges 13). O'Barr and Wyer point out that emotions play an extremely significant role in learning, especially in those women's studies classes that deal directly with personal issues. Johnella Butler contends that "feelings are direct lines to better thinking. The intuitive as well as the rational is part of the process of moving from the familiar to the unfamiliar in acquiring knowledge" (quoted in O'Barr and Wyer 17).

Finally, a belief in the significance of student-teacher connection is a significant characteristic of the feminist education. The Women's Studies Program at Ball State University undeniably puts this theory to practice. The staff and interns in the office are upbeat, intelligent, dignified, and genuinely concerned with the well being of *every* student. Carrie Lydon, a women's studies minor and intern at Ball State, claimed that her favorite aspect of the Women's Studies Program was the office atmosphere, in which "everyone is treated with respect and equality." She further declared that the office is "a

nurturing environment” and that “the classes are phenomenal.” Ball State women’s studies minor Janet Johnson asserted that the faculty is the best part of her feminist education because “they are very nice, friendly, and seem supportive of and interested in what you are doing” (Appendix A).

While feminist educators incorporate a variety of practices that are beneficial to those they desire to teach, the *content* of women’s studies courses has an inevitable impact upon the students’ personal lives. Most women who take introductory women’s studies courses have what has come to be called the “‘aha!’ experience” (Boxer 96). A young lady named Marguerite, described in the National Women’s Studies Association’s Report to the Profession, encountered her eye-opener when working on a paper about the exclusion of Virginia Woolf from library privileges, church services, and other advantages reserved only for men at Oxbridge. While studying at the library, Marguerite unwittingly stayed past dark and was rightfully terrified to walk home alone at such an hour. Marguerite’s realization that unlike Woolf, she was locked in, not locked out, of the library due to her gender was an epiphany for her (NWSA Task Force for the Association of American Colleges 1). This example demonstrates that for women’s studies students—as well as educators, faculty, and administrators—the personal is ultimately the political, and vice versa.

Nowhere is the personal utility of a feminist education better confirmed than in the statements of women themselves from Luebke and Reilly’s investigation of women’s studies graduates and a survey of Ball State undergraduate minors. A few of them follow:

My classes helped me personally because I learned to take myself radically seriously: to understand how my life is impacted by oppressive socioeconomic situations; to help me see how I benefit from many of them; to dig around in the roots of my experience and, exhausted and dirty, find out where they intermingle with others' (Luebke and Reilly 102).

—Sue Phillips, Colgate University

Women's studies has changed my life. Before my first course, I knew very little about this field of study, and really women's experience in general. As a result of this study, I've decided to dedicate the rest of my life to women's issues and feminism (Appendix A).

--Katie Mellen, Ball State University

Women's studies named the discrimination that I saw and felt and gave me the social, political, economic, and historical explanations. It was reassuring. I felt that my reality was being acknowledged and not denied (Luebke and Reilly 87).

--"Kate," University of Rhode Island

My major has affected my relationship with my husband, children, extended family, and friends. My words carry more weight now. Before, my husband had twice the formal education... Being older, wiser, and with a degree in women's studies, I stand firm on my values and worth (Luebke and Reilly 65).

--Valata Dakota Green Fletcher, University of Minnesota

In addition to learning that personal experiences are absolutely relevant to the knowledge learned in classrooms, students who choose to engage in a feminist education usually report an increase in self-confidence. Boxer found women in such courses positively exude self-esteem, possibly because of the supportive environment of faculty role models, instructional mentors, and peers (Boxer 97). Luebke and Reilly's study of

women's studies graduates and a survey of Ball State undergraduate minors support this theory. Listen to what some of the women have to say:

I have become a fighter. I have my own opinions and I can explain them. I take myself very seriously and strive to do better daily... (women's studies) allowed me to start carving my own life and to take responsibility for my self (Luebke and Reilly 100).

*--Janet D. Fender, University of
Massachusetts at Boston*

I do not underestimate the effect women's studies had on me in terms of boosting my self-esteem and self-confidence.... I don't think that I can really estimate, to this day, the enormous changes that occurred in me as a result of the respect I received in the women's studies classroom (Luebke and Reilly 83).

*--Jill R. Tregor, University of Massachusetts
at Amherst*

(Women's studies) has given me more definition to the observations and emotions I come across daily as a woman in our society. Before, I would feel that something was wrong and not be able to place why I felt that way. My minor has given me more insight into myself (Appendix A).

--Linda Rabadi, Ball State University

Women's studies helped me to realize that we 'can't change the past, but we can change the way we look at the past' so it doesn't continue to hurt us in the present. I came to see myself as valid and worthwhile—even smart at times!—through what I studied academically and the women with whom I studied. Women's studies helped me to find that voice within me that had been squelched for years (Luebke and Reilly 44).

*--Nancy O. Arnold, University of
Massachusetts at Amherst*

The minor gave me confidence—in myself, my skills, my ability to make wise decisions, and in my right to do what I want and choose. That has proven invaluable in all aspects of my life (Appendix A).

—Rachel O'Neil, Ball State University

Women's studies students find that, along with the irreplaceable individual benefits accompanying a feminist education, the courses are challenging, enjoyable, and informative. During a program evaluation at Oberlin College, students maintained that their women's studies courses were intellectually some of the toughest courses they had taken or were currently taking (Boxer 95). Yet, students such as these are more than willing to give their best effort for classes that are not only fun, but have a profound impact upon individual well being. Furthermore, students who actively participate in women's studies courses gain invaluable information regarding the unique achievements and contributions of women throughout history, the subtle and not-so-subtle sexist practices of contemporary society, and plausible methods to alter a world that is invariably misogynist. If, as the saying goes, knowledge is power, students involved in feminist education are among the most empowered individuals on college campuses.

A feminist education without fail instructs students to develop keen critical thinking skills. Indeed, women's studies students are taught to question absolute imperatives, to be open-minded concerning a variety of personal and political issues, to actively and collaboratively work to solve problems within as well as beyond the classroom setting, and to think not as society would direct them to, but of their own accord. One student at Old Dominion University stated that "in other courses, ideas are posed to us as 'this is the way it is,' but in women's studies courses an idea would be given to us to evaluate. I learned to question things for the first time" (Boxer 93). Sue

Phillips, a graduate of Colgate University in 1988, declared that her major in women's studies taught her, "above all else, to question what, culturally speaking, is considered 'true'" (quoted in Luebke and Reilly 101).

One interesting way to view critical thinking has been posed by Blythe McVicker Clinchy. She contends that critical thinking is really, in her view, "separate knowing." Someone who utilizes this form of thought argues from an unbiased and impersonal stance. A separate knower looks for every fault in a particular position using reason and not emotion—even if they know that the other individual's argument is correct (Balliet and Heffernen 12). In contrast, "connected knowing" emphasizes biasing oneself in favor of another's theory, which places these two methods of learning at opposite ends of the spectrum. "A connected knower believes that in order to understand what a person is saying, one must adopt the person's own terms and refrain from judgement" (Balliet and Heffernen 14). Connected knowing is uncritical, personal, and utilizes both rationalism and feeling. Clinchy avows that connected knowing is more often a woman's practice than a man's, and that this form of learning is commonly seen in women's studies classrooms. She maintains that a feminist education values both critical thinkers and connected knowers.

One of the most impressive outcomes of a feminist education is that it undeniably prepares students for a life in which global citizenship is paramount. Women's studies students, more often than not, graduate with the knowledge, confidence, self-discipline, integrity, and compassion that are absolutely necessary to make a significant difference in the world. In essence, women's studies faculty give students the "walking shoes" required for activism (Boxer 188). Patricia A. Washington declares that feminist

pedagogy is “the practice of connecting and integrating lived experience with the academic pursuit of knowledge for the ultimate goal of promoting positive social change” (quoted in Balliet and Heffernen 104). O’Barr affirms Washington’s belief with her contention that feminist scholars effectively combine theory and practice into one.

Indeed, women’s studies students maintain that one of the most important reasons for their choice of study is to be part of a movement that is working to alter current misogynist practices. And, according to Howe, these students are among the most highly motivated individuals on college campuses, as evidenced by above average academic work and community involvement reflecting their dedication to the cause (41). O’Barr and Wyer avow that a feminist education alters student’s attitudes toward themselves and women, prepares them to actively deal with the modern world, and makes students more aware of sexual discrimination so that they may efficiently battle against it when the time comes (123).

Yet it is not enough to write about the scholarly research supporting the idea that women’s studies gives rise to passionate reformers. To establish complete comprehension, one must listen to the voices of past and present students themselves. Sandi Gray-Terry, 1991 women’s studies graduate of Mount Holyoke College, says that her activism is a direct result of the content of her college courses:

My major deepened my political commitment to women’s issues on a global scale, strengthened my voice, and cemented my beliefs and values. Now that I have a voice, I will not sit down, and I will not shut up! I have been told that I am a powerful public speaker, which I hope I can use to benefit women’s causes (Luebke and Reilly 113).

Katie Mellen, Ball State University women's studies minor, comments that "as a result of this study, I've decided to dedicate the rest of my life to women's issues and feminism" (Appendix A). Sarah Jones, also a Ball State minor, contends that women's studies has made her "more prepared to take action" (Appendix A). Finally, Deborah A. Cohler, a graduate of Wesleyan University in 1991, maintains the following:

(Women's studies) contributed to my development as a feminist, as an intellectual, as an activist... It fuels my continuing interest and commitment to political and cultural events. It gives me a way to react to the morning newspaper and to people with whom I interact. To be more specific is a daunting task because I feel that so much of who I am comes from and through my experiences as a women's studies major (Luebke and Reilly 156).

Women's studies graduates and students often exhibit their dedication to improving the human condition by joining organizations, both locally and nationally, that directly or indirectly represent feminist values. Of the twenty-six Ball State women's studies graduates who responded to a women's studies questionnaire, just over half reported membership with at least one group. One woman declared membership with eight separate organizations, all of which are feminist in theory and practice! Some of the associations that past and present Ball State women's studies students are currently involved with are the National Women's Studies Association, Metropolitan Women's Political Caucus, National Association of Social Workers, Take Back the Night Alliance, Board for Alliance for Girls, Board for Girls United, Students for Choice, Pro-Choice Coalition of Kentucky, National Organization for Women, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Planned Parenthood Federation, National Association of Collegiate Women Athletic Administrators, Kentucky Homeless and Housing Coalition,

Ball State Feminists for Action, Parents, Friends and Families of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), and the League of Women Voters (Appendices A and B).

Another method by which past and present women's studies students demonstrate their commitment and enthusiasm for women's rights is through volunteerism. Over half of the Ball State respondents to a women's studies graduate questionnaire reported volunteer work involved with women. Some of their reported activities are as follows: participant for Breast Cancer Three-Day Walk, emergency room rape victim advocate, volunteer for rape crisis center and domestic violence shelter, Pro-Choice Coalition lobbyist, facilitator for women's social support group, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, anti-hate crimes vigil participant, Planned Parenthood volunteer, chairperson for Take Back the Night Alliance, volunteer for Peace Learning Center, and Girls Leadership Conference planner (Appendix B).

Additionally, many women's studies graduates incorporate activism into their choice of work, whether or not their occupation appears to be of the activist type. Dayna L. Bennett, Director of a Battered Women's Center and Rape Crisis Program and University of Northern Colorado graduate, says: "I learned through both my work at the shelter and my studies at the university that 'the personal is the political.' I decided to incorporate my feminist beliefs with my work and tried to make a difference in the world" (quoted in Luebke and Reilly 90). A number of women's studies students enter programs wondering, "But what, if anything, can I do with a women's studies degree?" In the opinion of this author, the answer to this inquiry is undoubtedly, "Anything you want to do!" The variability of occupational choice among women's studies graduates is truly astounding. Some careers that both Luebke and Reilly's respondents and Ball State

University women's studies graduates have chosen are as follows: Women's Studies Instructor and Coordinator, Psychologist, Peace Project Coordinator, Physician, Homeless Services Coordinator, Pre-Kindergarten Teacher, Public Policy Administrator, AIDS Task Force Director, Journalist, Social Worker, Domestic Violence Advocate, Secondary School Teacher, NCAA Gender Equity Specialist, Artist, Hate Crime Victim Advocate, Lawyer, Girl Scout Council Field Director, Union Organizer, Musician, Communications Consultant, Bakery Owner, and Energy Conservation Manager (Luebke and Reilly and Appendix B).

Overwhelmingly, women's studies graduates and students from universities nationwide, including Ball State, maintain that their undergraduate studies were or are excellent preparation for their perspective careers, a fact that serves as another advantage of feminist learning. The comments voiced by alumni and current students are exceedingly positive:

The critical-thinking skills I acquired as a women's studies major were a real asset during my two years in the MBA program and during the period that I worked in a 'straight' business environment. My degree gave me a context for viewing the power dynamics in the business world—and the confidence to assert myself and gain the respect necessary to succeed by those rules (Luebke and Reilly 26).

--Cathryn E. Couch, University of Michigan

Although neither my major or minor is directly related to my current field, both have proved helpful. Women's studies in particular strengthened my leadership skills (Appendix B).

--Hether Clark, Ball State University

(Women's Studies) has exposed me to new ideas, new perspectives, new ways of looking at the world. As a result, I think it has enhanced both my research and my teaching. If I had not majored, I'm sure that the courses I teach would be 'narrower' than they are—instead, I bring quite a bit of research/theory related to gender roles and attitudes into my courses, and try to raise students' awareness by highlighting cultural biases that favor men and exclude women (Luebke and Reilly 121).

--Cynthia J. Thomsen, Pitzer College

I feel that (women's studies) has made me more aware of problems and issues facing women, and I am very informed on these topics. Now I can get these problems noticed through the magazine I will be writing for (Appendix A).

--Emily Burns, Ball State University

As a public servant, the minor has helped me to consider how my actions and agency impacts women, children, families, and so forth. I am more sensitive to issues faced by women, which is important in government work (Appendix A).

--Rachel O'Neil, Ball State University

The testimonials of these and many other women's studies scholars unquestionably point to the fact that feminist pedagogy holds occupational utility.

As we have seen, there is an abundance of benefits that may be derived from a feminist education. Women's studies students enjoy courses that are interdisciplinary, promote diversity, emphasize student-centered instruction, impact students personally, contain challenging and enjoyable content, help develop critical thinking skills, encourage feminist activism, and prepare them to compete in the occupational realm. Students who choose this particular path are overwhelmingly pleased with the personal

and professional advantages that accompany feminist pedagogy and, more often than not, hold a strong desire to alter the misogynist practices of the world.

Indeed, there is a tremendous number of women's rights activists who are drawn to and have blossomed from women's studies programs today. Women's studies graduates and students walk an assortment of paths. Indeed, they might best be described as a "loose collection of individuals" (Baumgardner and Richards 54). Nonetheless, they are unified by one cause: a "movement for social, political, and economic equality of men and women" (Baumgardner and Richards 56). Some deliver their truth through scholarly literature; others via passionate phrases voiced over cups of coffee, on the treadmill at the gym, by the copy machine, or even at women's rights rallies. Some choose to work for organizations that advocate for women. Others may not have that opportunity, so they instead join local and national associations or volunteer their time to support what they believe in. Some are women or men of a minority heritage; others consider themselves white or Caucasian. Some make six digit incomes; others struggle daily to put a meal on the table. Some practice lesbianism as the only "real" form of feminism while others seek heterosexual relationships that place women and men on equal footing. Some label themselves feminists; others wouldn't dare touch the word with a ten-foot pole, let alone be *called* the "*F* word." Some resort to subtleties to rally converts to their side whereas others are quite vocal and active in promoting women's rights. But regardless of the ways in which women's studies graduates and students present themselves to the public, they each represent a form of activism that will one day lead to a world in which women are viewed as first-, not second-, class citizens.

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**Appendix A: Ball State Women's Studies
Minor Questionnaire Responses**

Women's Studies Minor Questionnaire

*****If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip it and move on to the next. You are not obligated to answer every question. Thanks again for your cooperation!***

NAME: Mary Jo Estes

MAJOR(S): Photojournalism

MINOR(S): women's studies

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: 05/02

AGE: 20

RACE/ETHNICITY: native american/caucasian

SEX: female

1. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

I have always been extremely passionate when it comes to women's rights and women's accomplishments. I hope to use the minor to help with women's organizations after graduations.

2. How many courses in Women's Studies have you taken/are currently taking?

I have taken two so far.

3. How has the minor influenced you personally?

I have learned a lot about issues concerning women and I have definitely spread the information on to others.

4. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular activities that you are involved with and any professional organizations to which you belong.

N/A

5. Do you plan to attend graduate school? If so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

I'm not currently planning on it.

6. If you do not plan on attending graduate school, what are your occupational goals? For those planning on earning advanced degrees, what are *your* ultimate career objectives?

I think I would like to work with a magazine for photography, and I would also really like to donate my free time to helping with A Better Way.

7. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has prepared you for life after college (i.e. graduate work, career)?

So far I'm only two classes into the minor, but I definitely think it will help me to make a difference and to always be quite confident in myself.

8. How might the Women's Studies Program be improved?

I have always thought that it should be offered as a major.

9. What do you believe are the strengths of the Women's Studies Program?

The different variety of classes and the resource room has always been a great help to me.

10. Additional Comments

Good luck with your thesis!

Women's Studies Minor

Questionnaire

*****If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip it and move on to the next. You are not obligated to answer every question. Thanks again for your cooperation!***

NAME: DEIDRE ELZROTH

MAJOR(S): French and History

MINOR(S): Peace studies and Women's studies

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: July 2001

AGE: 22

RACE/ETHNICITY: white

SEX: female

1. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

this sounds stupid, but vague interest, desire for interdisciplinary option

2. How many courses in Women's Studies have you taken/are currently taking?

my minor is complete. i've done courses mainly in the humanities realm

3. How has the minor influenced you personally?

it's really been quite an eye opener. i find myself filtering the study i've done in wmnst and aplying it elsewhere. i love discussions, so i really think i've managed to win some people over...make them less fearful of 'feminism'

4. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular activities that you are involved with and any professional organizations to which you belong.

5. Do you plan to attend graduate school? If so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

If so, where (if known) and in what field of study? i plan to attend law school in either valparaiso or Philadelphia

6. If you do not plan on attending graduate school, what are your occupational goals? For those planning on earning advanced degrees, what are *your* ultimate career objectives?

If so, where (if known) and in what field of study? i plan to attend law school in either valparaiso or Philadelphia

7. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has prepared you for life after college (i.e. graduate work, career)?

it really lends a great perspective to everything i pursue. it's constantly relevant.. just as relevant as my other disciplines... i'm aware of certain aspects of the working world which are of specific concern to women, and I'm prepared to work around/hopefully do something to change them

8. How might the Women's Studies Program be improved?
get a major!

9. What do you believe are the strengths of the Women's Studies Program?

kim, the resources made available by kim and the office...it's a great place to be and work...you should do it if you haven't yet!

10. Additional Comments

that's all...i'm a big fan of the wmnst program!
>

Women's Studies Minor Questionnaire

*****If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip it and move on to the next. You are not obligated to answer every question. Thanks again for your cooperation!***

NAME: Lindsey Murphy

MAJOR(S): Social Work

MINOR(S): Women's Studies

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: May 5, 2001

AGE: 22

RACE/ETHNICITY: white

SEX: female

1. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

It seemed fun and
interesting.

2. How many courses in Women's Studies have you taken/are currently taking?

Possible 6. However many are necessary

3. How has the minor influenced you personally?

It has made me more
conscious of gender issues. It has also made me more aware of my own
abilities that I have as a woman.

4. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular activities that you are involved with and any professional organizations to which you belong.

SSWA,
Christian Student Foundation

5. Do you plan to attend graduate school? If so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

Possibly. Administrative Social Work

6. If you do not plan on attending graduate school, what are your occupational goals? For those planning on earning advanced degrees, what are *your* ultimate career objectives?

I want to
work with young adolescents. I prefer prevention aspects.

7. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has prepared you for life after college (i.e. graduate work, career)?

Fairly well. I did an
internship through WS that helped me learn more about what I want to do in
my line of work.

8. How might the Women's Studies Program be improved?

I don't know. I
think it is great the way it is.

9. What do you believe are the strengths of the Women's Studies Program?

Caring
instructor's that take time to learn your name. Actual fun, interesting
subjects that can be of use to me in the future.

10. Additional Comments

I really love this minor. It has been a great
addition to my learning and achievements here at BSU.

Women's Studies Minor Questionnaire

*****If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip it and move on to the next. You are not obligated to answer every question. Thanks again for your cooperation!***

NAME: Holly VanMatre

MAJOR(S): Political Science

MINOR(S): Women's Studies

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: summer 2003

AGE: 29

RACE/ETHNICITY: caucasian

SEX: female

1. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

I wanted to learn about things I felt would be overlooked in most other classes, to have a women centered experience.

2. How many courses in Women's Studies have you taken/are currently taking?

I have already taken 1 and am currently taking 2 this semester.

3. How has the minor influenced you personally?

It has given me even more of a desire to want to be involved in something concerning women's issues as a career.

4. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular activities that you are involved with and any professional organizations to which you belong.

5. Do you plan to attend graduate school? If so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

Yes, Law School, hopefully IUPUI.

6. If you do not plan on attending graduate school, what are your occupational goals? For those planning on earning advanced degrees, what are *your* ultimate career objectives?

7. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has prepared you for life after college (i.e. graduate work, career)?

I feel it has given me a starting point to pursue my chosen areas of interest and provided me with more of a knowledge of certain issues.

8. How might the Women's Studies Program be improved?

Offer a sexual minorities class and more choices of classes focusing on ethnic women and their experiences. Include sexual orientation content (especially in WMNST 210) where appropriate. Be more political.

9. What do you believe are the strengths of the Women's Studies Program?

I like that I can learn of women's history/issues/accomplishments in a classroom setting instead of me just learning it on my own. I like that this program offers an opportunity to be with like-minded individuals.

10. Additional Comments

Women's Studies Minor

Questionnaire

*****If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip it and move on to the next. You are not obligated to answer every question. Thanks again for your cooperation!***

NAME: Katie Mellen

MAJOR(S): general studies with an emphasis in women's studies

MINOR(S): history

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: 2002

AGE: 21

RACE/ETHNICITY: caucasian

SEX: female

1. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

I don't really remember why I decided to take women's studies 210. I guess I was just interested because of my budding feminism. After I took 210 though, I was hooked. I wanted to take as many women's studies courses I could, so becoming a minor was a natural decision. At the beginning of this year, I decided to switch my major from journalism to general studies. I needed to have an emphasis for my degree, and I decided to make that women's studies. It's really the closest to majoring in it that you can get at BSU, which obviously needs to change.

2. How many courses in Women's Studies have you taken/are currently taking?

WMNST 210 and 400, PSYSC 324, HIST 215 and 452, COMM 390, and ENG 490.

3. How has the minor influenced you personally?

Women's studies has changed my life. Before my first course, I knew very little about this field of study, and really women's experience in general. As a result of this study, I've decided to dedicate the rest of my life to women's issues and feminism.

I'm not sure what direction this will take, but I know that I am destined to study and work within the context of women's issues.

4. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular activities that you are involved with and any professional organizations to which you belong.

At this point, the only organization that i'm involved in is feminists for action, where i am one of the co-coordinators.

5. Do you plan to attend graduate school? If so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

i am planning on attending grad school, but i have no idea when or where. i plan on majoring in women's studies.

6. If you do not plan on attending graduate school, what are your occupational goals? For those planning on earning advanced degrees, what are *your* ultimate career objectives?

7. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has prepared you for life after college (i.e. graduate work, career)?

8. How might the Women's Studies Program be improved?

well, like i said before, i think that there needs to be a women's studies major, but that takes more faculty and more funding that is as of now not available to the program. this would obviously be beneficial to anyone like me, but there are also additional benefits. because as of now the program is interdisciplinary, the women's studies office has no control over the course content and professors teaching many of the classes that count toward the minor. this has proven to be unfortunate in some cases. having more professors within the dept.

would ensure that they all have the same goals and philosophies behind the instruction.

9. What do you believe are the strengths of the Women's Studies Program?

just as the interdisciplinary aspect can be detrimental, it is also positive in some respects. the program allows students to take classes from many different depts. that would probably not be otherwise open to them. and, also, these classes kind of fill in the gaps (of women's experiences) of the traditional curriculum.

10. Additional Comments

Women's Studies Minor Questionnaire

*****If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip it and move on to the next. You are not obligated to answer every question. Thanks again for your cooperation!***

NAME: Jami Rosner

MAJOR(S): Photojournalism

MINOR(S): women's studies

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: 5/01

AGE: 21

RACE/ETHNICITY: white

SEX: female

1. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

want to work for a womens magazine

2. How many courses in Women's Studies have you taken/are currently taking?

6 courses

3. How has the minor influenced you personally?

taught me about myself

4. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular activities that you are involved with and any professional organizations to which you belong.

5. Do you plan to attend graduate school? If so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

no

6. If you do not plan on attending graduate school, what are your occupational goals? For those planning on earning advanced degrees, what are *your* ultimate career objectives?

unsure

7. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has prepared you for life after college (i.e. graduate work, career)?

8. How might the Women's Studies Program be improved?

9. What do you believe are the strengths of the Women's Studies Program?

very open minded women

10. Additional Comments

Women's Studies Minor Questionnaire

*****If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip it and move on to the next. You are not obligated to answer every question. Thanks again for your cooperation!***

NAME: Carrie Buchanan

MAJOR(S): Dietetic Technology and General Studies

MINOR(S): Women's Studies

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: may 2001

AGE: 22

RACE/ETHNICITY: white

SEX: female

1. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

I became a part of the program because I am so intensely interested in the field/subject. Some friends and I took 210 together and I remember thinking that I had to have something to do with this in my career. I wanted to get into Dietetics because I'm interested from the eating disorder aspect because so many of my friends have suffered through it. I have now changed my ideas of what I hope to be doing in the future. I have to run, but I will finish later, thanks (sorry)

2. How many courses in Women's Studies have you taken/are currently taking?

3. How has the minor influenced you personally?

4. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular activities that you are involved with and any professional organizations to which you belong.

5. Do you plan to attend graduate school? If so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

6. If you do not plan on attending graduate school, what are your occupational goals? For those planning on earning advanced degrees, what are *your* ultimate career objectives?

7. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has prepared you for life after college (i.e. graduate work, career)?

8. How might the Women's Studies Program be improved?

9. What do you believe are the strengths of the Women's Studies Program?

10. Additional Comments

Women's Studies Minor

Questionnaire

*****If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip it and move on to the next. You are not obligated to answer every question. Thanks again for your cooperation!***

NAME: Amy Joseph

MAJOR(S): Religious Studies

MINOR(S): Women's Studies

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: Summer '02

AGE: 23

RACE/ETHNICITY: White

SEX: Female

1. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

I wanted to be more informed on women's issues.

2. How many courses in Women's Studies have you taken/are currently taking?

3. How has the minor influenced you personally?

It makes me consider the many ways women are oppressed in society.

4. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular activities that you are involved with and any professional organizations to which you belong.

Volunteered for Planned Parenthood,
a member of National Organization for Women,
(does Feminist for Action, PFLAG, and Anti-Racist
Action count for extracurricular activities?)

5. Do you plan to attend graduate school? If so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

Yes but I don't know what school. I hope to continue with religious and women's studies and become a teacher.

6. If you do not plan on attending graduate school, what are your occupational goals? For those planning on earning advanced degrees, what are *your* ultimate career objectives?

I would like to write and make films (specifically documentaries).

7. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has prepared you for life after college (i.e. graduate work, career)?

It's introduced me to writings (ideas) from women that I otherwise would have never heard of.

8. How might the Women's Studies Program be improved?

9. What do you believe are the strengths of the Women's Studies Program?

I like when we have discussions (which depends on the class).

10. Additional Comments

Women's Studies Minor

Questionnaire

*****If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip it and move on to the next. You are not obligated to answer every question. Thanks again for your cooperation!***

NAME: Janet Johnson

MAJOR(S): Social Work

MINOR(S): Women's Studies

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: undecided

AGE: 47

RACE/ETHNICITY: Caucasian

SEX: female

1. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

My first Women's Studies Class 210 - was SO interesting & I just loved it!
I never really was very aware of many of the issues that we learned about -
and I want to learn more. Also, before this class, I did not even know about
the Women's Studies Program. I decided to take the class with my daughter
- (she was the one with the interest at first).

2. How many courses in Women's Studies have you taken/are currently taking?

I have only taken one course in Women's Studies. (would like to take more)
but I need nite classes

3. How has the minor influenced you personally?

Since I have had only one class, I can not say how the minor has
influenced me. However, the 210 class has really made me WANT to be more aware of
what is going on with women's issues in our country as well as other countries.
I now listen to what legislation is affection women and advertising and many other

issues.

4. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular activities that you are involved with and any professional organizations to which you belong.

I belong to the PFLAG Local & National organization

(Parents, Friends & Families of Lesbians & Gays). I volunteer with Spectrum here on campus. Try to volunteer and be active in various drives for needed items for various agencies (i.e. participated in the Women's Studies Christmas Drive),

Am. Vets drives for items, Better Way, Muncie Mission, etc.). I am currently joining the Women League of Voters. I am the "Missions Team Coordinator" at our church to get our congregation involved in volunteering within our local community and else where. I am a member of the Am. Red Cross Fire Family Support group (where families loose their homes due to fire).

5. Do you plan to attend graduate school? If so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

I don't know about Grad. School, (still trying to complete B.S.)

6. If you do not plan on attending graduate school, what are your occupational goals? For those planning on earning advanced degrees, what are *your* ultimate career objectives?

To eventually work being involved in changing legislation within the Social Work System.

7. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has prepared you for life after college (i.e. graduate work, career)?

8. How might the Women's Studies Program be improved?

Hopefully more classes can be offered at more available times. Also, perhaps more PR about the Women's Studies Minor and what they have to offer. (I did not even know it existed & I am a student and have worked at BSU for 20 years).

9. What do you believe are the strengths of the Women's Studies Program?

Their faculty - One, I had an outstanding faculty member teach my 210 class & made it so interesting. Two - from being in the Women's Studies Office & meeting other faculty/staff - they are very nice, friendly and seem interested in what you are doing/supportive.

10. Additional Comments

I am glad I am going back to school. However, so many of the classes that you take are just because you have to - some are interesting, but others, while you are learning new things, you are still just trying to "get through them". The 210 class that I took, though really put a spark in me and has opened new doors and made me think a lot about issues and research issues that I probably would have not really known about or been aware of. The 210 class also made me look at myself and do some reflection. Therefore, I really want to take more Women's Studies classes and minor in this program.

Women's Studies Minor

Questionnaire

*****If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip it and move on to the next. You are not obligated to answer every question. Thanks again for your cooperation!***

NAME: Emily Burns

MAJOR(S): English

MINOR(S): Women's Studies

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: Graduating in May 2002

AGE: 21

RACE/ETHNICITY: Caucasian

SEX: Female

1. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

I learned about the minor through my Psych of Women class

2. How many courses in Women's Studies have you taken/are currently taking?

I have taken five courses in the minor

3. How has the minor influenced you personally?

I have become much more aware of problems as well as caring and understanding.

4. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular activities that you are involved with and any professional organizations to which you belong.

I belong to the Golden Key National Honors Society, and the MT Cup Revue staff.

5. Do you plan to attend graduate school? If so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

I don't plan on attending Graduate school.

6. If you do not plan on attending graduate school, what are your occupational goals? For those planning on earning advanced degrees, what are *your* ultimate career objectives?

I plan on moving to Nashville with my fiancé and writing for a magazine.

7. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has prepared you for life after college (i.e. graduate work, career)?

I feel that it has made me more aware of problems/issues facing women, and I feel very informed on these topics. Now I can get these problems noticed through the magazine I will be writing for.

8. How might the Women's Studies Program be improved?

It should be made known more, and the entire aspect of it should be Known

9. What do you believe are the strengths of the Women's Studies Program?

I love how I feel like I am a part of something that is trying to help women all over the world. It feels good to make a difference, especially by making other people aware of the problems women face.

10. Additional Comments

I'm so happy I chose this minor! The best part was when I worked as an intern in the Women's Studies office. It was such a great experience!!!!

Women's Studies Minor Questionnaire

*****If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip it and move on to the next. You are not obligated to answer every question. Thanks again for your cooperation!***

NAME: Linda Rabadi

MAJOR(S): : Piano Performance

MINOR(S): Women's Studies, Humanities, Music History

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE: May 2003

AGE: 20

RACE/ETHNICITY: White

SEX: Female

1. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

To fill the gaps in our western educational system that continually excludes important contributions by women and non-anglo ethnic groups. In other words, to give myself a more complete education.

2. How many courses in Women's Studies have you taken/are currently taking?

I am finishing my third women's studies class. To date I have taken Women's Studies 210 (of course!), Sociology of Women, and now Women in US History.

3. How has the minor influenced you personally?

4. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular activities that you are involved with and any professional organizations to which you belong.

5. Do you plan to attend graduate school? If so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

I plan on attending graduate school, obtaining a masters and phd in music. I am unsure of where i will attend school.

6. If you do not plan on attending graduate school, what are your occupational goals? For those planning on earning advanced degrees, what are *your* ultimate career objectives?

Piano instruction at the university level.

7. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has prepared you for life after college (i.e. graduate work, career)?

It has given me the more balanced liberal arts foundation that i was looking for originally, which will in turn allow me to approach my own music and my influence as an instructor to know of, include, and hopefully contribute to women's work.

8. How might the Women's Studies Program be improved?

Although the subject matter of these courses are interesting, i do not find myself academically challenged. A more rigorous curriculum would stimulate more growth in the department, and produce better a student both confident in his/her schoolwork and of the knowledge obtained in the classes.

9. What do you believe are the strengths of the Women's Studies Program?

The department is made up of instructors and administrators who are all eager to help my educational process. They are all very approachable, making the environment of the department a comforting one.

10. Additional Comments

My women's studies minor is a part of my education that I know will stay with me throughout my life. The knowledge i gain in these courses has been, and I'm sure will continue to be, very applicable to my everyday experiences.

Women's Studies Minor Questionnaire

****If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip it and move on to the next. You are not obligated to answer every question. Thanks again for your cooperation!**

NAME emily a. wood
MAJOR(S) wildlife biology
MINOR(S) women's studies
EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE spr. 02 AGE 21
RACE/ETHNICITY caucasian SEX female

1. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

to become more aware and active in the issues that directly or indirectly effect me.

2. How many courses in Women's Studies have you taken/are currently taking?

3 completed

Summer I internship

2 IP

2 registered next fall/summer I

3. How has the minor influenced you personally?

definitely. i have become hyper-sensitive

to the issues affecting women, and also to the fact that history has played such an amazing role in today.

4. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular activities that you are involved with and any professional organizations to which you belong.

5. Do you plan to attend graduate school? If so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

6. If you do not plan on attending graduate school, what are your occupational goals? For those planning on earning advanced degrees, what are *your* ultimate career objectives?

7. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has prepared you for life after college (i.e. graduate work, career)?

it has made me an involved activist for women's rights — something that should affect all parts of my life, not just career.

8. How might the Women's Studies Program be improved?

9. What do you believe are the strengths of the Women's Studies Program?

excellent organizers, leaders ;

AMAZINGLY STRONG WOMEN!

10. Additional Comments

women's studies rocks!

good luck with your research!

Women's Studies Minor

Questionnaire

****If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip it and move on to the next. You are not obligated to answer every question. Thanks again for your cooperation!**

NAME Sara Jones
MAJOR(S) English (focus: Creative Writing)
MINOR(S) Women's Studies
EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE May 5 2001 AGE 21
RACE/ETHNICITY White SEX Female

1. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

I was interested in learning more about women's issues.

2. How many courses in Women's Studies have you taken/are currently taking?

Seven

3. How has the minor influenced you personally?

I have become more proactive and learned more information than any other program at BSU. Plus I've made a bunch of friends.

4. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular activities that you are involved with and any professional organizations to which you belong.

5. Do you plan to attend graduate school? If so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

I want to eventually get my MFA.
I don't know where.

6. If you do not plan on attending graduate school, what are your occupational goals? For those planning on earning advanced degrees, what are your ultimate career objectives?

Ultimately I want to write professionally.
I don't know any other ~~good~~ plans other than that at this time.

7. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has prepared you for life after college (i.e. graduate work, career)?

I will be more aware, informed and because of these things more prepared to take action.

8. How might the Women's Studies Program be improved?

More classes ~~should~~ offered in the actual dept. and in other dept's that relate to women.

9. What do you believe are the strengths of the Women's Studies Program?

That there is something to interest everyone and the people who run it.

10. Additional Comments

Becoming a W.S. ^{minor} ~~major~~ has been one of my best decisions.


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 sign-out

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1 of 4

Next

Subj Re: Women's Studies Questionnaire
 Date Thu, 26 Apr 2001 9:19:51 PM Eastern Daylight
 From Carrie Lydon <calydon79@yahoo.com>
 To: Hmhollis99@aol.com

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Reply



Reply A



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sorry it has taken me so long. i hope this helps.

>

>

> **If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip

> it and move on to the next. You are not obligated

> to answer every question.

>

> 1. Name - Carrie Lydon

> 2. Major(s) - Political Science and Spanish

/Minor(s) -Women's Studies and Sociology

> 3. Expected graduation date - May 2001

> 4. Age - 22

> 5. Race/Ethnicity

> 6. Sex - female

> 7. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

i took an awful sociology course (sociology of women)

and i went to complain to kim, had a wonderful

conversation, and became a minor

> 8. How many courses in Women's Studies have you

> taken/are currently taking?

i have taken nine wmnst classes

> 9. How has the minor influenced you personally?

it has changed the my life. it has opened me up to

feminism and the womyn's cause. i now plan on working

with womyn, womyn's issues for a career

> 10. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular

> activities you are involved with and any

> professional organizations to which you belong.

-feminists for action

-pi sigma alpha (poli sci honorary)

-golden key

> 11. Do you plan on attending graduate school? If

> so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

yes i do. either in womyn's studies or public policy.

> 12. What are your occupational goals (if not

> graduate study)? ultimately i would like to teach.

before that i would like to work for a non-profit

womyn's organization
 > 13. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has
 > prepared you for graduate work or your occupational
 > goals?
 it has given me practical experience and knowledge.
 > 14. How might the Women's Studies Program be
 > improved?
 -it needs to be made into a major, it needs to have
 more faculty members
 > 15. What are your favorite aspects of the Women's
 > Studies Program?
 -the atmosphere of the office. everyone is treated
 with respect and equality. it is a nurturing
 environment. the classes are phenomenal.
 > 16. Additional comments...
 >
 >
 > Again, thank you for participating!
 > In Sisterhood,
 > Heather
 >

=====

 it's not going to stop until you wise up. - aimee mann

Do You Yahoo!?

Yahoo! Auctions - buy the things you want at great prices
<http://auctions.yahoo.com/>

-----Headers-----

Return-Path: <calydon79@yahoo.com>
 Received: from rly-yc05.mx.aol.com (rly-yc05.mail.aol.com
 [172.18.149.37]) by air-yc05.mail.aol.com (v77_r1.36) with ESMTTP;
 Thu, 26 Apr 2001 21:19:51 2000
 Received: from web13402.mail.yahoo.com (web13402.mail.yahoo.com
 [216.136.175.60]) by rly-yc05.mx.aol.com (v77_r1.36) with ESMTTP; Thu,
 26 Apr 2001 21:19:14 -0400
 Message-ID: <20010427011913.51831.qmail@web13402.mail.yahoo.com>
 Received: from [147.226.5.3] by web13402.mail.yahoo.com; Thu, 26 Apr
 2001 18:19:13 PDT
 Date: Thu, 26 Apr 2001 18:19:13 -0700 (PDT)
 From: Carrie Lydon <calydon79@yahoo.com>
 Subject: Re: Women's Studies Questionnaire
 To: Hmhollis99@aol.com
 In-Reply-To: <b7.cacda3e.27f52b85@aol.com>
 MIME-Version: 1.0
 Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii

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Subj: Re: Women's Studies Questionnaire

Date: Thu, 29 Mar 2001 9:36:14 PM Eastern Standard Time

From: "Dawne Shields" <ashes2ashes@home.com>

To: <Hmhollis99@aol.com>

1. Name

Dawne Shields Whitworth

2. Major(s)/Minor(s)

Sociology/ Womens Studies and Counseling Psych

3. Expected graduation date

May 2002

4. Age

28

5. Race/Ethnicity

White

6. Sex

Female (and proud of it)

7. Why did you become a Women's Studies minor?

Because I saw it as a way of finding myself as well as getting in touch with my ancestry and learning what feminism was.

8. How many courses in Women's Studies have you taken/are currently taking?

I have taken 5 courses / I am currently not taking any this semester.

9. How has the minor influenced you personally?

I have learned that feminism isn't a dirty word used only for radical women (and the stereotypical feminist - dyke), it is instead a way of getting in touch with life, loyalty and femaleness. It has produced a feminist in me, that is proud to be woman.

10. Please list any volunteer/extracurricular activities you are involved with and any professional organizations to which you belong.

Alpha Kappa Delta

11. Do you plan on attending graduate school? If so, where (if known) and in what field of study?

Yes, I plan on either attending IUPUI or U of Chicago for my MSW (masters in social work)

12. What are your occupational goals (if not graduate study)?

My ultimate goal is marriage and family therapy.

13. How do you feel the Women's Studies Program has prepared you for graduate work or your occupational goals?

I feel that the women's studies program has taught me to be more than just

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"female." In other words, just being female and feminist isn't enough . . . activism and participation in making things better for all women through teaching, sharing information and learning more about the plight of women everywhere.

14. How might the Women's Studies Program be improved?

The women's studies program could have more classes within the program itself. Wmst 210 and 400 (other than independent studies and internships) are the only classes offered by the program. Women's Studies program could be stronger by offering more classes along those lines, not that the other curriculum is bad, just that there should be more to the program than those 2 classes.

15. What are your favorite aspects of the Women's Studies Program?

I love the Theory class, it was so interesting, but I think that a pre-req should be with that....maybe Soc 402. I also appreciate all the hard work that the women's studies department does to have activities (like Women's Week).

16. Additional comments...

When I said a pre-req with the wmnst 400 class, to be Soc 402 is due to the fact that after taking the 400 class, I took Soc 402 and found that then I could relate a lot of the theories that were discussed (for ex, Marxism).

I hope this will help you.

Dawné

----- Original Message -----

From: <Hmhollis99@aol.com>

To: <MANDY@bsu.edu>; <CALYDON79@yahoo.com>; <CBSUBVERSIVE@aol.com>; <AMONYON@home.com>; <MASLAVEN@bsu.edu>; <MKREEG1@yahoo.com>; <CARELBUCHANAN@hotmail.com>; <MOJO420007@yahoo.com>; <EMIBURNS@CS.COM>; <HRVANMATRE@bsu.edu>; <MOIDA@purpleturtle.com>; <RENO0801@aol.com>; <JAMIROSNER@hotmail.com>; <JLMCCORD2972@hotmail.com>; <COUNTRYCUTIE3894@aol.com>; <SMAGNOLIA2@hotmail.com>; <JENSATCC@yahoo.com>; <VJCLOUD@bsu.edu>; <CMTRADER@bsu.edu>; <LINDSAYCONRAD@yahoo.com>; <RIOTGRRRR@mail.com>; <TJRUSSELL@bsu.edu>; <HSSTOY@bsu.edu>; <ASHES2ASHES@home.com>; <LEMURPHY@bsu.edu>; <MSSTADER@aol.com>; <MCL0808@indy.net>; <ANYEAGER@bsu.edu>; <MCJ79@yahoo.com>; <JJOHNSON@bsu.edu>

Sent: Thursday, March 29, 2001 6:21 PM

Subject: Women's Studies Questionnaire

Hello Women's Studies minors!

My name is Heather Hollis. I, too, am a Women's Studies minor and am conducting some research for my Senior Honors Thesis. I would greatly appreciate it if you could help me out with this! All you have to do is print off a copy of the questions below and when you reply to this e-mail, answer them for me! I realize that the end of the semester is very stressful. believe me, I know this. However, ten to fifteen minutes of your time would help the Women's Studies Program and myself immensely! Thank you, and have a great day.

**If you do not wish to answer a question, just skip it and move on to the next. You are not obligated to answer every question.

1. Name
2. Major(s)/Minor(s)
3. Expected graduation date
4. Age

**Appendix B: Ball State Women's Studies Graduate
Career Questionnaire Responses**

Women's Studies Program

WOMEN'S STUDIES GRADUATE CAREER QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete the following and return in the envelope provided to Stephanie Rich in the Women's Studies Program office by November 17, 2000. You may also fax it to 765-285-4277.

Name Jean Kramer Crosby

Address 131 Newberry Ave. 1N, Libertyville, IL 60048

(847) 866-4490 work

Telephone (847) 573-9915 home Fax _____

e-mail crosbyj@rotaryintl.org

Ball State University

Year of Graduation 1996 - July

Major(s) Speech Communications

Minor(s) ~~Speech Communications~~ Womens Studies, Sociology, Organization
Communications

Post-Graduate Education

Degree(s) _____

Year(s) _____

Institution(s) _____

Current Occupation

Job Title and Employer Fund Development Supervisor, The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International

Brief description of current position _____

responsible for the fundraising efforts in the midwest and eastern Canada

over please

Please tell us how your women's studies minor has impacted your career choices and/or experiences _____

From my Women's Studies courses, I knew that I wanted a career which involved giving something back to society. I wanted a career which supported a cause that I could be passionate about.

Please list any volunteer activities _____

Please list any membership or professional organizations to which you belong _____

NSFRE (National Society of Fund Raising Executives)

Additional comments _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your input is appreciated. Please feel free to attach any additional materials you would like to share with us.

→ Working for a non-profit is something that I feel good about. I am proud to raise \$ for an organization that funds projects all over the world that is helping to eradicate the Polio virus, feed the hungry, provide shelter for the homeless, and clothe the naked.

Women's Studies Program

WOMEN'S STUDIES GRADUATE CAREER QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete the following and return in the envelope provided to Stephanie Rich in the Women's Studies Program office by November 17, 2000. You may also fax it to 765-285-4277.

Name Jessica Moore

Address 224 W. State Rd. Hastings, MI
49058

Telephone 616-948-9173 Fax _____

e-mail Kovacevich@hotmail.com

Ball State University

Year of Graduation 1999

Major(s) Sociology

Minor(s) Women Studies, Business Mgt.

Post-Graduate Education

Degree(s) _____

Year(s) _____

Institution(s) _____

Current Occupation

Job Title and Employer Substitute Teacher / Mary Kay Consultant

Brief description of current position Currently I am subbing in Hastings and also concentrating on my Mary Kay business until I move to England over please with my husband in April.

The Ball State Women's Studies Program Pamphlet

In addition to writing "The Feminist Education: Empowering Students, Changing the World," I have spent considerable time creating the preliminary "draft" of a women's studies pamphlet that shall be printed in the fall of 2001. The brochure should, once completed, be six pages, whose contents are fully elaborated upon in the following pages. Although this data is not final, I have included it with this thesis because it falls into the context of encouraging students to enjoy the benefits of a women's studies education. The design of the pamphlet will be decided ultimately by University Programming and Kim Jones-Owen. However, I feel that I have significantly contributed to the development of this endeavor.

**You Should Be A
Women's Studies
Minor!**

Why?

1. To develop an understanding of the experiences, contributions, and achievements unique to women throughout history.
2. To explore the roots of sexist principles and practices in contemporary society and how they foster misconceptions regarding women.
3. To acquire an awareness of the significance of current gender issues.
4. To investigate topics not traditionally offered in most major field curriculums.
5. To broaden your knowledge of women's accomplishments and experiences relative to various disciplines.
6. To secure the opportunity to utilize classroom knowledge in a practical way via internship experience.
7. To attain an appreciation for the diversity of an international community in which differences in gender, race, culture, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, ability, and religion should be celebrated.
8. To become part of an interwoven community of students and educators who are genuinely concerned about your personal and professional progress.
9. To obtain the confidence, discipline, determination, wisdom and integrity necessary to compete in the present occupational realm.
10. To prepare you for a career and life in which global citizenship and participation is a paramount objective.

The Women's Studies Minor:

The women's studies minor offers an interdisciplinary field of study that examines women's experiences throughout history and across cultures, races, classes, ethnic groups, sexual orientations, age groups, abilities, and religions. The goal of the minor is to empower students with knowledge, collaborative learning, critical thinking, appreciation of diversity, and personal growth.

The information here, correct at the time of publication, is subject to change. Ball State University practices equal opportunity in education and employment and is actively committed to diversity within its community.

What can you do With a Minor in Women's Studies?

- Peace Project Coordinator
- Domestic Violence Advocate
 - Social Worker
 - Journalist
- Pre-Kindergarten Child Supervisor
 - Musician
 - Union Organizer
- AIDS Task Force Director
 - Lawyer
 - Human Rights Organizer
- Communications Consultant
- Girl Scout Council Field Director
 - Psychologist
 - Law Librarian
- Homeless Services Coordinator
 - Public Policy Administrator
 - Artist
- Hate Crime Victim Advocate
 - Physician
- Elementary or Secondary Educator
- Director of Teenage Pregnancy Prevention and Education Program
 - Energy Conservation Manager
 - NCAA Gender Equity Specialist
 - Business Owner
- Women's Studies Program Coordinator
 - Researcher

What Types of Courses Classify as Women's Studies?

- Introduction to Women's Studies
 - Women in Art
 - Women in Literature
 - Psychology of Women
- Sociology of Human Sexuality
- Gender Issues in the Mass Media
 - Paid/Unpaid Internship
 - Women and Health
 - Women in Religion
- Women in American History
 - Anthropology and Women
 - Family Law
 - Women and Politics
- European Women Writers
 - Feminist Theory
 - Sociology of Women
- Underrepresented Voices in Mathematics, Science, and Technology
 - Gender in the Workplace
- Safe Places: Writing Out of the Margin and into the Center

*** The women's studies minor requires 18 hours of approved curriculum. For detailed information about coursework or for advising and assistance, please contact the Women's Studies Office, Burkhardt Building 108, at (765) 285-5451.**

Women's Voices: Alumnae Speak Out

"A women's studies degree exposes you to different perspectives and viewpoints that you do not receive in your 'traditional studies.'"

Hether Clark, 1997

"The women's studies classes were my most enjoyable at Ball State."

Sheila Slocum, 1996

"The women's studies minor at Ball State is a thorough introduction to the history, development, and issues of a woman's life. I am able to apply what I learned in my classes and internship to my personal and professional life."

Bridget LeLoup, 2000

"I have to say that the women's studies internship has easily been the most valuable experience I have had in four years at Ball State, particularly in terms of practical skills."

Deidre Elzroth, 2001

"The women's studies portion of my undergraduate education has already helped my career immensely."

Lisa Avery, 1992

"The minor helped me to see the successes of women in many areas, both past and present, and allowed me to reinforce my place among them. In my career, the support, advancement, and recognition of women is paramount, and the women's studies minor from Ball State fostered a sense of history and future achievement."

Mira Coleman, 1994

"The women's studies minor peaked my awareness and enlightened me. Thanks to all of the women who helped to make me stronger. I hope I can do the same for future generations."

Jennifer Isenberg, 1997

"The program is made up of instructors and administrators who are all eager to help my educational process. They are all very approachable, making the environment of the program a comforting one."

Linda Rabadi, 2003

"My women's studies minor is a part of my education that I know will stay with me throughout my life. The knowledge I gain in these courses have been, and I'm sure will continue to be, very applicable to my everyday experiences."

Linda Rabadi, 2003

"I really love this minor. It has been a great addition to my learning and achievements here at Ball State."

Lindsey Murphy, 2001